

LIVING
IT OUT



**DAILY
BIBLE
STUDY**



CEDARCREEKCHURCH

The Golden Rule

July 16, 2018

There was once a very old man whose eyes had become dim, his ears dull of hearing, his knees trembled, and when he sat at the table he could hardly hold the spoon and spilt the broth upon the table-cloth or let it run out of his mouth.

His son and his son's wife were disgusted at this, so the old grandfather at last had to sit in the corner behind the stove, and they gave him his food in a wood bowl. And he used to look toward the table with his eyes full of tears.

They were once sitting when the little grandson of four years old began to gather together some bits of wood upon the ground. 'What are you doing there?' asked the father. 'I am making a little trough,' answered the child, 'for father and mother to eat out of when I am big.'

The man and his wife looked at each other for a while, and presently began to cry. Then they took the old grandfather to the table, and henceforth always let him eat with them, and likewise said nothing if he did spill a little of anything.

(Adapted from *The Old Man and His Grandson* by The Brothers Grimm)

This story is a great example of the “golden rule” in action. We are challenged to switch places with whomever is on the receiving end of our actions. The command to treat others the way we want to be treated can be found in Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31.

In this weekend's message, Ben pointed out that often the golden rule is not the reality that drives our treatment of others. Instead, we treat people the way they treat us. We become a judge, administering treatment to others based on what we think they *deserve*. Other times, we act with prejudice and treat others the way we *think* that they will treat us.

While we are called to treat others with honor, if we simply try to live that out on our own, it becomes exhausting. But, **when we know where we belong, we are free to honor everyone always.**

1 Peter 2:9

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

We are God's very own possession! We are part of his family! When we receive that truth, we can begin to live graciously different lives, and we can honor everyone.

This weekend, Ben shared with us an acronym to help us define honor.

H = Humble– keeping your wants, ego and perspective in check.
O = Open Hearted– connecting with others without agenda
N = Non-Combatant– able to disagree without drawing blood
O = Open Handed– looking for opportunities to bless and be generous.
R = Receptive– understand that every time we are mistreated it is an invitation to trust God.

1 Peter 3:8-9

⁹ Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. ⁹ Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing.

Questions:

In your relationships, do you most often find yourself treating others the way you want to be treated or the way they treat you?

We prejudge when we treat others the way we think that they will treat us. Who are the people in your life that you prejudge?

Next Steps:

When I know where I belong, I am free to honor everyone! Read 1 Peter 2:9 and journal about what it means to you to be God's very own possession!

Also, each day this week, we will spend time in one chapter. Today, we will focus on 1 Peter 1. Feel free to simply read through the chapter. Or, you can listen to it through StreetLights Bible. Download the app or visit streetlightsbible.com.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for adopting me into your family and giving me a place to belong for eternity. Help me to find comfort and confidence in that truth so that I can H.O.N.O.R. everyone always. In Jesus' name, amen.

This post was written by Ben Bockert, Director of and regular contributor to the LivingItOut Bible Study

My Temporary Home

July 17, 2018

*This is my temporary home
It's not where I belong
Windows in rooms that I'm passin' through
This is just a stop, on the way to where I'm going
I'm not afraid because I know this is my temporary home.*

This is the chorus to Carrie Underwood's song "Temporary Home." It is her way of teaching about heaven to those who may not be familiar with the Christian faith but are familiar with her genre of music. It is Christian yet fringes on the edge of secular to introduce the idea, hopefully, to everyone in her wide audience.

My husband and I have lived in the Toledo area for thirty-eight years. To some, that may be a short period of time; to others who are younger, like my children, it is a lifetime. Our family has occupied the same house for thirty-one of those years. When our kids were still little, our neighborhood was full of families of different heritages, faiths, and customs. It was a learning experience for both the children and us adults. Often the lessons were easier for the younger ones than for the adults. The children usually "played well with others!"

The benefits were that my children, as well as the other children in the neighborhood, were exposed to others who were different than themselves. I see them being much more accepting and able to embrace those differences. They often are more likely to H.O.N.O.R. those with different beliefs.

Living in this temporary home can often make Christ followers feel like foreigners. When we are surrounded by those who believe differently than we do, we have a great opportunity to treat them in such a way as to bring honor and glory to God.

1 Peter 2:11-12

¹¹ Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. ¹² Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.

Questions:

Do you find it difficult to H.O.N.O.R. those who are different than you?

What does it mean to you that your conduct may help someone else “give honor to God when he judges the world” (1 Peter 2:12)?

Next Steps:

Reach out and honor someone different than yourself. Reflect on how the experience impacted your relationship with God.

As we continue through 1 Peter this week, we focus today on 1 Peter 2. We encourage you to read through this chapter in your Bible. Or, you can listen to it through the StreetLights Bible. You can download the app or visit streetlightsbible.com.

Prayer:

Dear heavenly Father, thank you for the blessings you have given me! Help me be a blessing to others, reaching out to those who are different! Amen.

This post was written by Pam Haynam, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut Bible Study

Who's Behind Authority?

July 18, 2018

On July 6, 2018, I retired from my position with Hancock County after twenty years of service. During that time, I reported to two different elected officials. I was one of the lucky government employees because I actually respected my employers. It was easier to submit to their authority because their office follows Christian principles. However, my first boss would sometimes use the phrase, "It's easier to ask for forgiveness than permission." This would make submission more difficult. We did not always see eye-to-eye, but it was important that I supported to the position of authority.

Romans 13:1-2, 5

¹ Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. ² So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. ... ⁵ So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.

1 Peter 2:15, 17

¹⁵ It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you ...¹⁷ Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.

It was not until I listened to Ben's sermon last weekend and started my research for today's LIO contribution that I understood why it is so important to submit to authority. God calls us to submit to authority because *God is* the authority. He is the authority behind the authority. We are to submit for the Lord's sake. It reflects poorly upon God when we disrespect those in authority over us. The only reason we should not submit would be if they go against what God has spoken in his Word. God's authority trumps man's authority every time.

1 Peter 2:18, 21

¹⁸ You who are slaves must submit to your masters with all respect. Do what they tell you—not only if they are kind and reasonable, but even if they are cruel ... ²¹ For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you.

Acts 5:29

But Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than any human authority."

Questions:

Have you ever had a boss that treated you unfairly or with insolence? Did you repay them in a non-combatant or open-handed way, or did you retaliate by talking badly about them to your co-workers and family?

Next Steps:

Write a list of people in your life that have authority over you. If they have been unkind to you, journal ways you could sympathize with them. Realize that in honoring their position, you are honoring God.

As we continue through 1 Peter this week, we focus on 1 Peter 3 today. Feel free to simply read through the chapter. Or, you can listen to it through the StreetLights Bible. Download the app or visit streetlightsbible.com.

Prayer:

Dear Father in heaven, help me to trust that you will take care of things when I believe I am being unfairly treated by those in authority. Grant me wisdom to know how to make a difference in my world. Show me how to be humble so I may be sympathetic to others. I pray for the ability to model the Gospel by bearing injustice without vengeance. In Christ's name, amen.

This post was written by Jenn Macke, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut Bible Study

Happily Ever After

July 19, 2018

As a teenage girl growing up in Germany, I was fascinated by the real-life fairytale wedding of princess Elisabeth of Bavaria (more famously known by her nickname Sissi) to Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I in 1854. He was actually meant to marry her older sister Helene in an arranged political marriage but fell madly in love with Sissi instead—and she with him—during the initial meeting of the families. A royal wedding based on love was unusual, even scandalous at that time. But unlike in fairy tales, where the couple rides off into the sunset to live happily ever after, their marriage was sabotaged by the strict, formal rules of the Viennese royal court of the times and the unrelenting meddling of Franz's mother. Since divorce was not an option in those times, especially in a royal family, they decided to live separate lives until Sissi's early death at the hands of a political anarchist at the age of 60. As an adult, I can see now that, tragically, their love could not have endured because they were not able to H.O.N.O.R. one another as a couple due to their circumstances.

Ben spoke this past weekend about how when we know where we belong, we are free to honor everyone. Today we will look specifically at how husbands and wives can H.O.N.O.R. one another. In this context, 1 Peter has some advice for husbands and wives:

1 Peter 3:3-4

³ Don't be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. ⁴ You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God.

1 Peter 3:7

In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.

Growing up, I always knew I would never wanted to have a marriage end tragically like that of Sissi and Franz - as two people who live together but no longer cherish one another. So, I paid close attention to those in my life who had long-lasting, happy marriages. It became clear to me that there were some

key elements that they all shared, and which I have tried to emulate in my own life with the man I love. These key postures for a “Happily Ever After” are nicely summarized by this week’s message from Ben to H.O.N.O.R. our spouses:

Humble – When you do not bring any ego to the relationship with your spouse, you can look for the best solution to any given problem as a team, rather than being interested in your solution being the “right” one.

Open-Hearted – When you love your spouse deeply and with a selfless love, you can open your heart fully to him/her and allow them fully into your life without worrying about getting hurt. It is the kind of love that gives freely but also allows you to receive.

Non-Combatant – When you genuinely respect one another as people, even when you have different views on some things, it allows you not to be easily offended and to let go of trying to be in control or needing to be right.

Open-Handed – When you regularly give your spouse attention through small (and sometimes large) gestures to let him/her know what it means for you to have them in your life, when you thank them for what they do for you, and when you spend quality time with your spouse, they will feel appreciated by you.

Receptive – When you do all the above with mindfulness and purpose, you are following God’s will, and he will grant you countless blessings in your relationship with your spouse.

Often, fear of getting hurt is one of the biggest reasons why people fail to H.O.N.O.R. one another in their relationships. However, if you know where you belong because you have a close relationship with God, you will be free to H.O.N.O.R. your spouse and reap the rewards.

Questions:

Has God presented you with any opportunities today to H.O.N.O.R. your spouse in some way? What are the fears which hold you back from being humble, open-hearted, non-combatant, and/or open-handed with your spouse?

Next Steps:

Write a commitment to being humble, open-hearted, non-combatant, and/or open-handed with your spouse and pin it to your fridge. Make a list of things you can do to show your spouse that you appreciate them being in your life and then do one each day (or at least once a week). If you are not sure, you might want to

ask your spouse what makes them feel special and loved, since different people speak different languages of love.

As we continue through 1 Peter this week, we focus on 1 Peter 4 today. Feel free to simply read through the chapter. Or, you can listen to it through the StreetLights Bible. Download the app or visit streetlightsbible.com.

Prayer:

Dear Father in heaven, please give me the courage and strength to H.O.N.O.R. my spouse by being humble, open-hearted, non-combatant, and open-handed. Please give me the wisdom to appreciate your having placed them in my life. Please help me be confident and at peace as I am grounded in my relationship with you, so that I may be able to open my heart fully to my spouse. Amen.

This post was written by Cordula Mora, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut Bible Study

Friday: Nailed It!

July 20, 2018

The annoyingly obnoxious yet funny show *Nailed It!* takes a below-average baker and challenges them to re-create a complex bakery masterpiece. To the home viewer, the three “bakers” (I use that term LOOSELY) seem to be complete dopes, and the viewer just knows he/she could do it better and claim the \$10,000 prize. Interestingly, in 1 Peter we have the masterpiece recipe for H.O.N.O.R.ing any relationship humanly experienced. God wants to take the below-average relationship and create his masterpiece of beautiful relationships between his people. Peter has laid out the step-by-step directions for fulfilling godly, rich, and satisfying relationships. Today, we look at relationships *between* Christ followers.

1 Peter 3:8-12

8 Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. 9 Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing. 10 For the Scriptures say, "If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies. 11 Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it. 12 The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil."

Peter's audience consists of believers, all of whom need guidance for relating to other believers. The above verses are instructions for a new way of treating one another - completely unheard of until Jesus physically entered the world, lived by example, and taught the crowds this new way: turn the other cheek, love your enemy, do good to those who do evil, etc.

Based on the acronym **H.O.N.O.R.**, honoring another believer by being like-minded means **H**umbling myself. That does not mean blindly agreeing just to get along. Not at all! It means humbling myself to another and giving their ideas/needs precedence over my own. **O**pen-hearted is to love as a brother, love as a sister. Be willing to love someone who is not like you simply because that person is a child of God, just as you are. **N**on-combative means we do not have to be right or take revenge or gossip about what another has done to us. We are called to return good for evil. If a brother or sister in Christ has wronged us, and

you repay with love, you will “heap burning coals on his head.” (Proverbs 25:21-22). **O**pen-handed means to be generous. The first century church shared everything so that no one would go hungry or thirsty or be homeless. We can share open-handedly, too, as we have opportunities to give of our time, talents, and treasure at church. Be **R**eceptive to opportunities to trust God. The Lord wants to bless us through these steps.

This kind of behavior creates relationships that honor God, masterpieces that reveal the very love of God to a world that needs him desperately. Then, God will say to you and to me, “Nailed it!”

Questions:

Which of the steps is hardest for you? Which of these steps have you “nailed”?

Next Steps:

Practice **ONE** step each day for a week on one believer in your life with whom you’d like to improve your relationship. Choose the most difficult step for you from the H.O.N.O.R. acronym. Journal how that changed your relationship with the believer you chose.

Today, we complete 1 Peter by going through 1 Peter 5. Feel free to simply read through the chapter. Or, you can listen to it through the StreetLights Bible. Download the app or visit streetlightsbible.com.

Prayer:

Jesus, you came, you taught, and you lived the example of a holy life with humans who were imperfect. Help me to read your word and study your word so that I can know how it is done. Peter gave me some practical ways to live a life pleasing to you. I humbly submit my will and tendencies to your perfect will so my relationships will honor you and bring glory to the Father. In your name I pray, amen.

This post was written by Julie Roehl, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut Bible Study.